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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 000081 SIPDIS E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/05 TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EFIN](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SCUL](#) [AR](#)

SUBJECT: Argentina: Buenos Aires Mayor Macri on Political Plans and Current Situation REF: BUENOS AIRES 25; 09 BUENOS AIRES 1222; 09 BUENOS AIF

1. (SBU) Summary: Ambassador hosted prominent opposition leader and Buenos Aires Mayor Mauricio Macri, along with four of his cabinet members International Relations Fulvio Pompeo. Deputy Chief of Mission, Legal Attache, Regional Security Officer and Acting Political Counselor joined for the Embassy. Macri Confirms Candidacy

3. (SBU) Macri openly discussed his ambitions for the presidency in 2011 at several points in the conversation (he again confirmed his candidacy in public on February 2). He described his presidency of the Boca Juniors Soccer Club as having been an outstanding political education (dealing with issues like access to press and locker rooms, distribution of seats, and business decisions in front of a membership of about 15,000) and said that the Club's national following was his greatest political asset. "If I receive political support outside of Buenos Aires," he said, "in 90% of the cases it is for managing Boca and in 10% for being Mayor of Buenos Aires." 4. (SBU) Macri believed there was a regional swing underway toward the right, beginning with the election of Sebastian Pinera in Chile, someone Macri described in friendly terms as a wide ranging intellect who always knew more than anyone whatever the topic, from culture, sports, business, government, and history. Macri believed that Jose Serra would win the presidency in Brazil, and hoped to follow in the regional trend himself in 2011. Kirchners Finished, but Dangerous 5. (C) Beginning with a discussion of the President Fernandez President and first spouse Nestor Kirchner's continuing assault on government institutions and fiscal responsibility. The first couple's aggressive style had turned most people off, he said, something he rediscovered virtually every day when he went door-to-door in the city to meet citizens. Even those of the lower middle class (the Kirchners' political base) were frustrated and fed up with the national government. On the political front, a broad political opposition was in agreement on the dangers posed by the Kirchner's but would have to learn to work together to limit the damage they might cause before 2011. 6. (C) Before the Mayor's arrival, Montenegro had described President Kirchner's firing of Treasury Minister to the Kirchners, seemingly urging more open criticism of measures we considered unwise. Ambassador responded that the Embassy would continue to seek a positive working relationship with the Government of Argentina while raising in a constructive fashion our areas of concern. 8. (SBU) Macri shared an interest in further exchanges with U.S. law enforcement to assist his Police Chief in training and refurbishing Colon theater. 9. (C) Footnote: An influential banker whose daughter works with Macri said that he believes that Macri will eventually run for the presidency and De Narvaez would set aside his presidential aspirations and compete for the governorship of Buenos Aires province.) The banker speculated that the 50-year old Macri will decide that he should abandon a quixotic candidacy in order to focus on developing a successful record of governance in the City of Buenos Aires, with a view to the next presidential election in 2015. MARTINEZ